Retail outlets of Oil PSUs

3512. SHRI S.P.M. SYED KAHN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number and location of the retail outlets set up in Tamil Nadu by the Central Government PSUs during the last three years;

(b) the locations proposed to be set up during the next three years; and

(c) the number of retail outlets which are in existence in Tamil Nadu, district-wise?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) During the last three years, i.e. 2002-03 to 2004-05, the public sector oil marketing companies (OMCs), *viz.*, Indian Oil Corporation Limited, Hinudstan Petroleum Corporation Limited, Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited and IBP Co. Ltd set up 648 retail outlets at various locations in the State of Tamil Nadu.

(b) These OMCs tentatively plan to set up 774 more retail outlets at various location in the State during the next three years, *i.e.* 2005-06 to 2007-08.

(c) As on the 1st March, 2005, OMCs had 2,196 retail outlets in different districts in the State of Tamil Nadu.

Involvement of Ministry of External Affairs in Indo-Iran Project

†3513. SHRI MOTI LAL VORA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) progress made in high-level talks between Iran, Turkmenistan and Myanmar, including various other countries regarding Indo-Iran gas pipe line project;

(b) whether his ministry would undertake consultation with the Ministry of External Affairs regarding progress made in the said project and talks to be held with various countries;

(c) whether the said work was handled by Ministry of External Affairs till recently;

(d) whether any representative from the Ministry of External Affairs would be included in the meetings to be held at international level; and

(e) whether the pipe line which is to be laid between Iran and India would pass through Pakistan and who will be responsible for the security of the said pipe line?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) The proposal for the Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline is at initial stages of discussion. For the gas pipeline from Myanmar through Bangladesh, following tripartite Ministerial-level discussions in Yangon on 12-13 January, 2005, a draft tripartite MoU was prepared at the technical lebel in Yangon on 24-25 February, 2005. This draft MoU is under examination of the Government. India's participation in the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan gas pipeline project is under examination.

(b) Discussions on these projects are conducted in consultation with the Ministry of External Affairs.

(c) In keeping with established practice, the Miflistry of External Affairs handles all foreign policy dimensions but techno-commercial angles are substantively handled by the Ministry concerned in terms of the Allocation of Business Rules.

(d) Yes, Sir, to the extent that the Ministry of External Affairs so desires.

(e) Yes, Sir. Safeguards to ensure security of supplies would be built into the project when the details are finalized.

PCRA'S awareness programme on fuel crisis

3514. SHRI B. K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Petroleum Conservation and Research Association of India is seized of the impending fuel crisis India is facing and to fine-tune its mass education and awareness programmes through press and electronic media;

(b) whether the oil companies would consider sponsoring walking clubs and use of manually propelled vehicles for short distance commuters and students; and

(c) whether the oil companies would also sponsor dedicated pedestrian and cycling tracks along the highways and roads within urban areas?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) Petroleum Conservation Research Association (PCRA) is engaged in mass education and awareness programmes about energy conservation through print and electronic media.